

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BAR - BENCH - MEDIA CONFERENCE

A meeting of the Bar-Bench-Media Conference was held on Tuesday, April 23, 1996, at 11:00 a.m. in the Executive Boardroom of the Sheraton Hotel in Dover. The meeting was open to the public. Notice of the meeting had been posted. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members from the Print News Media

Tammy Brittingham

Members from the Electronic News Media

Marilyn Buerkle

Allen Loudell

Mike Sigman

Members from the Bench

Judge Jay Paul James

Judge Roderick R. McKelvie

Members from the Bar

Eugene H. Bayard, Esquire

Howard Handelman, Esquire

Richard D. Kirk, Esquire

Harvey B. Rubenstein, Esquire

Tammy Brittingham called the meeting to order. Tom Nagle, Court Administrator of the Justice of the Peace Courts, attended the meeting on behalf of Chief Magistrate Griffin. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Reports were not given by the FOIA Committee, the Education Committee or the Internet Committee. Harvey Rubenstein reported that the Constitutional Centennial project was moving forward with draft chapters of the book due in by May 1. Harvey said that the Bar-Bench Conference in June 1997 would be devoted to the Constitutional Centennial. While it is premature at this time, Harvey hoped that the Bar-Bench-Media Conference would develop programs in support of the Constitutional Centennial. It was suggested that the media might do public service announcements such as the Bicentennial minutes that were done for the Federal Constitution. It was thought that the Education Committee might be able to put together mini-presentations concerning the celebration with programs aimed at various age groups.

The next agenda item was a discussion of whether it would be appropriate and meaningful for the Conference to take a position on the proposed new Justice Center. The benefits of a Justice Center for the Bar, Bench and Media were discussed. It was finally decided that the Conference would support a resolution supporting the concept of a Justice Center. However, the media representatives felt that it would be a conflict of interest for the media to lobby for the Justice Center. A resolution was proposed to read:

The Bar-Bench-Media Conference supports the concept of a new Justice

Center which would promote increased access to courtroom proceedings for the public and the media.

This resolution was generally approved subject to a review of a final version to be submitted at the June meeting.

Harvey Rubenstein gave a brief overview of the FOIA seminar that was to take place after the meeting.

Howard Handelman asked if the Conference in future meeting wanted to get back to a discussion of issues of mutual concern. He suggest that one issue be placed on each meeting's agenda. Two issues that Howard suggested were privacy in the courts and the issue of reporting stories that exposed an ongoing investigation. Steve Taylor suggested a topic concerning when comments are on or off the record and what those terms mean. Tammy asked all members of the Conference to suggest issue topics and submit them to her by May 15, 1996. She suggested that the Conference assign topics to specific meetings and assign two people to be discussion leaders on each side of the topic. The topic for the next meeting will concern what the media means by on and off the record. Tammy and Judge McKelvie, as next chair of the Conference, will meet and discuss a format for these issue discussions prior to the next Conference meeting.

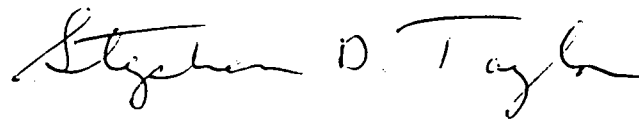
The Conference decided that meeting dates should be scheduled a year and

a half in advance to allow all members to set their calendars. The proposed meeting date in the 3rd Thursday of every other month which means 6 meetings a year. The proposed schedule starting with the June meeting is:

June 20, 1996
August 15, 1996
October 17, 1996
December 19, 1996
February 20, 1997
April 17, 1997
June 19, 1997
August 21, 1997
October 16, 1997
December 18, 1997

The next meeting of the Conference is scheduled for Thursday, June 20, 1996 at 1:00 p.m. in the Family Court in Dover. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen D. Taylor".

Date: May 2, 1996